Science Research in Universities under the Chairmanship of Professor M M Sharma set up by the Central Government, has observed that there is no formal linkage between universities and national-level research institutions and the same should be promoted through joint research projects and training and that the number of PhDs in Sciences and Engineering disciplines from Indian Universities is quite low *viz-a-vis* the number of M Sc / B Tech when compared to what it is in developed countries.

(d) The Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) in Indian higher education is estimated to be about 12.4 %, as compared to estimated world average of 26 % and 55% in developed countries.

Unexpensive education for children

2683. SHRI GANGA CHARAN: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the arrangement being made by Government to provide unexpensive and best education for the children from poor families;

(b) whether Government is going to make any arrangement for providing low cost education in private and Government schools and institutes;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI D. PURANDESWARI): (a) to (d) Article 21A, as inserted by the Constitution (Eighty-Sixth Amendment) Act, 2002, provides for free and compulsory education of all children in the age group of six to fourteen years as a fundamental right in such manner as the State may, by law, determine.

Consequently, the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Bill, 2008, has been introduced in the Rajya Sabha. The Bill, *inter-alia*, provides that every child in the age group of six to fourteen years shall have the right to free and compulsory education in a neighborhood school till completion of elementary education.

In Government and Government-aided private secondary schools across the country, the fees charged are generally nominal.

Transparency in higher education

2684. SHRIMATI JAYA BACHCHAN: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is considering a proposal to regulate fees, admission etc. of deemed universities;

(b) whether Government also proposes to probe complaints of lack of transparency in higher education; and

(c) if so, what are the details in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI D. PURANDESWARI): (a) The University Grants Commission (UGC), in its meeting

Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

held on 22nd June 2009, approved the UGC (Fee Structure in Institutions Deemed-to-be-Universities) Regulations, 2009 and UGC (Admission in Professional Programmes of Study at Institutions Deemed-to-be-Universities) Regulations, 2009, which are at present with the Government for consideration.

(b) and (c) While there are no specific complaints received with regard to lack of transparency, the Central Government is committed for ensuring transparency in the higher education system. Accordingly, in order to ensure that all the vital information / details relating to higher educational institutions are placed in the public domain, the Government has issued a directive under section 20(1) of the University Grants Commission (UGC) Act 1956, to the Commission to direct universities and higher educational institutions recognized under clause (f) of Section 2 of the UGC Act, 1956 and institutions declared as Institutions 'Deemed to be Universities' under Section 3 of the UGC Act, 1956 to place on every such institution's website full and complete information relating to availability of infrastructure and physical assets, admission criteria, details of fee structure, details regarding courses and academic curricula, information regarding faculty position, details regarding study centres etc.

Language of medium in schools

2685. SHRI PRAVEEN RASHTRAPAL: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the important recommendations of National Knowledge Commission (NKC) in the area of school education from primary to higher; and

(b) whether his Ministry has prepared action taken report on the NKC's recommendations as there are many recommendation concerning language of medium and second language in addition to English etc?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI D. PURANDESWARI): (a) and (b) The important recommendations made by National Knowledge Commission in the area of school education from primary to higher secondary education include the following:-

- There is a need for a central legislation affirming the Right to Education.
- Substantially increased public spending both for elementary and secondary education.
- Urban planning and local planning must explicitly incorporate the physical requirements for schooling, including provisions for playgrounds and other school facilities.
- Norms for central Government disbursal to States for SSA funds must be made more flexible.
- There should be greater flexibility in disbursing funds down to the school level and a greater degree of autonomy of local level management in the use of funds.
- Early childhood education is extremely important and must be universalized.